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COMMONWEAL

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Strikes and Legislation

THE WIDESPREAD applause which first greeted President Truman's breaking of the rail strike quickly subsided once the trains began to move. National gratification that a settlement had been reached soon gave way to bitter criticisms of the means resorted to. Labor leaders, professional liberals and Republicans of the most conservative stripe—some of them opportunistically—joined in denunciation of the Truman Bill. Partisan journals which had gleefully printed pictures of the President eating ice cream at a party for disabled veterans on the lawn of the White House at the hour the strike was being called now criticize him for having taken too strenuous action to make the unions back down.

The trains are running, optimistic reports of a coal settlement are current as we go to press, and proposed anti-labor legislation is helped along by the impending maritime strike threatened for June 15. Yet no viable method of handling these industrial relations problems is in sight.

Our nation has yet to devise a system of mediation which would take rising prices into account, not give capital, management or labor undue advantages over each other or the consuming public and would guarantee an approximation of social justice in each dispute. Moreover, it is difficult to see how that objective could be achieved by letting unions and management fight it out. If workers' demands seem exorbitant, many business enterprises are content to drift along inactive—secure in the knowledge that their war taxes will be repaid to offset company losses. Besides, there simply would not be enough available strikebreakers. In short, existing arbitration machinery is inadequate, and there is no likelihood of socially harmful management-union fights to a finish.

What is pending in Washington to fill this vacuum? The Case Bill, which has passed both Houses in slightly different versions, is one attempted answer. Its terms are largely negative. It would penalize unions for breaking contracts with employers, prevent secondary boycotts by unions, exclude foremen from effective collective bargaining, curtail picketing and racketeering and prevent exclusive union control of health and welfare funds. It would also provide fact-finding facilities in public utility labor disputes and decree a sixty-day cooling off period in all cases brought before a federal mediation board. All these terms would curtail labor's strength. It would cripple many of the powers American labor has enjoyed since the passage of the Wagner Act; the President is expected to veto the bill. At the present juncture perhaps the worst feature of the Case Bill is that it is permanent, rather than temporary emergency legislation.

The universally criticized President's bill, on the other hand, has in its favor the fact that it would be in force not longer than six months beyond the date on which the American Government declares the war to be officially terminated. Its wholly objectionable feature is the clause which empowers the President to draft into the armed forces all company officials and employees who fail to obey orders to return to government-seized plants, mines, railroads etc. Such a procedure is too drastic. As its critics say, it grants too much power over the life of every citizen to a single individual. The loss of seniority even where all fellow-workers lose seniority, too, coupled with the loss of employment security would seem to be a sufficient deterrent to the rank and file. While the fines and jail penalties for business and labor leaders who fail to take "the appropriate affirmative action" to restore full-time operations would in most industries provide the bill with sufficient teeth to assure return to work under government control. As a temporary measure a revised version of the President's Bill appears distinctly preferable to the Case Bill.

There are urgencies to keep our economy uninterruptedly at work during coming months. Foremost are American commitments to the starving peoples of Europe and the Far East. There are also the desperate housing needs of our own nation. Finally the importance of building up a full-steam American economy in order to

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achieve domestic strength and stability and to push international rehabilitation. Such vast needs surely indicate valid restrictions to the right to strike, at least in certain key industries. The situation would not have been so critical had we not been in such haste to toss out war restrictions: rationing, priorities for building materials, the War Labor Board. Now we must resort to makeshifts. No one has advanced a complete answer. But it is important to see that no group of our citizens is imposed on by the restrictions which are pending, that unsocial procedures are not saddled permanently on the American body politic.

Europe's Elections

IN MANY countries of Europe there are beginning to be elections and that of course is what we wanted. We have always wanted schools, hospitals, playgrounds and elections everywhere because we have them here and this is a fine country to live in. We have always thought that if people voted freely in their countries they would make them more pleasant to live in and we would find them easier to live with in peace. In our minds the trouble has always been with a few names; history had always been urged into outbreaks of violence by Prince Hal (of the Old Vic) who wanted to be King of France, or by Napoleon who wanted to be Emperor of Russia, or by Mussolini who wanted to be Napoleon, or by the Kaiser whose desires in retrospect seem modest, or by Hitler whose desires were not modest, or by Stalin whose desires we do not know. This view of history is perhaps oversimplified; undoubtedly it is false—it has led always to magnificently eloquent invective, before, during and after each war, while leading, between the wars, to a stupefied acceptance of the profound unpersonified causes which provoke them.

The Czechoslovaks and the Dutch have been voting; the French elected people to make a constitution; then they voted not to accept the constitution these people made; now they are voting to elect another set of representatives to make another constitution; the French have been voting quite actively. It is fitting that we should admire the French, the Dutch, the Czechs and the Slovaks for their diligence. It is natural also that we should hope that the Poles soon may be allowed to vote for Mikolajczyk or for anyone else, the Yugoslavs for Tito or against Tito, the Italians for a monarchy or for a republic.

We admire and we hope; but when the peoples of Europe at last are voting, we do not understand so easily why they so often appear to be voting themselves into total confusion or into ideal positions for future civil wars.

We look at the elections that are taking place in Europe and it is very hard for us to find out what they mean. We do not have to vote in them; the Europeans have to vote in them and it is very hard for the Europeans to know what they mean. In America, before the war, it was not so difficult; you voted for the Republicans or for the Democrats, knowing that after Election Day the country would still be there. But in Europe you vote for people who say they are Catholics or socialists or communists or monarchists and after Election Day the only thing you can be certain will still be there is famine. You cannot elect yourself out of famine. You cannot elect yourself into the peaceful valley with white sailboats out on the river and a whole country organized and calm.

Yet you have to try, and that is the reason why there have to be elections. It should be a little easier for Americans now to be patient with Europeans while they are trying to make up their minds about régimes and constitutions and voting this way and that way and not entirely despairing. It should be a little easier for us to be patient now because we do not seem to know exactly what to do ourselves. We have the valleys but they are not very pleasant where the coal mines are, we have the rivers, but in the Hudson just above New York eighty ships or more are rusting away at anchor, not filled with grain, not sailing for Europe; we have this country rich and wide but it is not so organized and not so calm. So that we may have to do some difficult voting ourselves.

The "Banned" German Pastoral

THE TEXT of the Easter Pastoral of the northwest German bishops which was banned by the American and French Military Governments (not by the British whose zones includes most of the area) is finally gradually becoming current in the United States—through the efforts of the minor rather than "great" press.

The original reports saying that the pastoral was "withdrawn at the request of military government officials," has meanwhile been superseded. M. G., to quote an explanation published in *The Tidings* of Los Angeles, "did not ask that the pastoral be withdrawn, but merely that certain of its statements be reconsidered. The Bishops voluntarily withdrew the Pastoral 'for the sake of good relations.'" That still leaves rude questions, when the hierarchy continued to find it wise to publish it in the British zone where no question was evidently brought up of the continuation of "good relations."

The eight bishops and archbishops and the Kapitularvikar of Muenster who signed the letter began by asserting their right:

> Our principal concern at every Bishops' Conference, constituting our first and real task, is the religious and moral regeneration of our flock and the sanctification of the individual. However, the general living conditions of our

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people cannot be ignored at these conferences, because their economic, juridical and political position immediately affects the religious and moral situation. Moreover, the moral regeneration of our nation depends entirely on a satisfactory settlement in these spheres.

The main body of the Pastoral is a complaint against conditions in Germany with a warning and plea that they should be improved. It is fantastic to think that the hierarchy, or any Germans, are supposed to like the conditions existing there. Admittedly, the Military Government of the Occupation has to be essentially dictatorial government, but just exactly why M.G. deemed it proper to discourage effectively the voicing of the inevitable protest by these leaders of the Church and pastors of so many German people is not clear at all.

Three of the complaints of the Bishops are quite definite, and an assertion that their airing would be a bad thing is practically a repudiation of the spirit and means of democracy: these are the protest against the driving of people without due or decent process out of Silesia and Sudetenland, the transmutation of great numbers of German P/W's into displaced slave labor, and the quick expropriations of landowners in a brutal fashion which reduces production and throws more people into the category of homeless, propertyless "displaced persons." These protests were worded in reasonable terms, and the brief discussion of land reform in particular (which the Bishops strongly favor) would add to any sincere debate upon the subject.

The to-be-expected complaint against the denazification program is far less sympathetic to American ears, but it could seem politically subversive only to the unhealthy over-sensitive. Without careful and somewhat charitable reading, the passages about "the sense of justice of the German people" might read unhumorously ironical to the outside anti-Nazi. But note that it is the *resurrection* of the people's sense of justice that the Bishops speak about. The introduction to the letter points out: "Chiefly by systematically perverting their sense of justice the National-Socialist régime brought about the moral degeneration of the people. . . . On the other hand, we hoped that the new rulers would do everything in their power to establish a sense of justice in the German nation and to ensure the rights of individuals anew, thus laying the foundations for a spiritual recovery of the German people." That appears a humility which should turn the sharp word when the authors go on to point out general cases where they feel that the new rulers are not in fact fostering new foundations and spiritual recovery.

A complaint about "collective guilt" goes hand in hand with the one against the denazification program. We and they obviously have different biases in considering the problem of German guilt. The Bishops know that they themselves and great numbers—indeed, a majority—of their people did not favor the ugliest phases of nazism, that they protested and campaigned against numerous parts of the nazi program, that their pressure was exerted to mitigate the evil of National Socialism. All that doubtless constituted one kind of resistance to nazism, and apparently the German Catholics overwhelmingly feel that it should absolve them as being at worst "mere followers." On the other hand, to nearly all the Allies, such opposition (even though no one knows what added hell it prevented) appears a very puny type of resistance. Too many of the Allies lost their lives, their property, their cities, their grasp on normal life to permit them to consider such piecemeal and qualified opposition to Hitler sufficient for the circumstances. We saw not only our own men and women giving their lives in the war and our own ordinary soldiers taking the risks of war fairly freely, but we also have seen the genuine but not over-numerous German heroes of the resistance—a great proportion of them German Catholics—who opposed nazism with all they had: many of them killed by the Gestapo; some miraculously getting through hardly scathed; many, many of them released by Allied armies to return now from torture and isolation, living, perhaps, but tragically only part alive, injured in body and heart and spirit so that few can now be active in the new affairs as, during the hard times, they were the real leaders of the moral life of their country. There is no such thing as collective guilt when what is meant is collective sin. But the Bishops speak of "personal guilt . . . incurred either through commission or omission." That personal guilt spreads out very broadly and we admit it reaches even to our own doorsteps, but it is not edifying to see German religious leaders trying to sweep it away from dangerous proximity to themselves and their friends who lived not enough miles from Dachau.

But "peace is the work of justice," the German bishops say most rightly. The conclusion of their pastoral is a peroration on this theme, and they speak in it with an authority and truth which no secular power on earth has a right to challenge or to silence. Their whole pastoral is a plea for peace in justice, in the immediate practical matters colored by their national position, but fundamentally of universal validity. Before giving the blessing of God, they say: "May both victors and vanquished remember this! Let everyone in his sphere beware of breaking the law, and let him play his part that the rising generation may above all be freed from the pernicious error that might comes before right."

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Paying Our Way

The role of social security in the future of America

James E. Murray

SOCIAL SECURITY measures, important as they are in strengthening and upholding the freedom and dignity of the individual and of the family, are not in themselves sufficient to remove the fear of economic insecurity or to provide assurance of a decent standard of living for all. The extent to which we attain our broad objectives of freedom from want and freedom from fear will depend, in large measure, on our ability as a nation to maintain a high and stable level of employment and income.

We need to remind ourselves that the economy of our nation today differs radically from the economy of former times. That earlier economy was characterized by almost unlimited opportunity for individual and family security, development and advancement, because it was in its beginning mainly agricultural, and it had the outlets of new frontiers. But our country has reached the limit of its geographical frontiers and has undergone an industrial revolution.

We live today in a money economy, an economy which — without proper safeguards — has been characterized by periods of mass depression and which is constantly harassed by the poverty and insecurity of countless families. The human values of independence and individual opportunity and enterprise, upon which our democracy was built, have suffered greatly as a result of our economic development and expansion. We must, therefore, now revive and reenforce these values through measures for social security that are realistically geared to our present economy—the one in which we live and must live. Without such measures to give people security while at the same time preserving freedom, we face the danger that people may turn away from democracy itself.

By setting our sights for a socially secure America, however, we are aiming also at the broader objective of increasing the basic stability of our economy. Social security payments increase purchasing power and assure a minimum level of demand for the products of farm and industry. Because these payments are used for current maintenance by many families otherwise without income, their effect on consumer demand is immediate and disproportionate to their size.

Even under the most prosperous operation of our economy, the earnings of many families are cut off at a time when there is the most urgent need for them. Individuals become too old to work. They become unable to work because of injuries or sickness. They die without having been able to make adequate provision for the support of their families. Persons who work for wages and salaries are confronted with the additional risk of involuntary unemployment—not necessarily the widespread, long duration unemployment of an economic depression but, inevitably, the sporadic unemployment resulting from the technological changes and seasonal shifts which are part of a dynamic economy.

If earnings cease, the family needs a substitute form of income out of which to pay the rent and to buy the groceries. Individual savings are too uncertain and too costly a method of providing this substitute. Even during their best earning years, relatively few persons receive incomes large enough to permit the accumulation of savings which will carry them through the years after enforced retirement. If earnings are cut off unexpectedly and prematurely—particularly during the period when family responsibilities are at their peak—there may have been neither time nor opportunity to accumulate savings.

Social insurance provides a method of compensating for loss of earnings which is more democratic and dignified than public or private charity at its best, and which is far more certain and less expensive than any form of private savings. Our country embarked upon its first large-scale experiment in social insurance in 1935 when the Social Security Act was adopted. Because our social insurance system excludes large groups of the working population and fails to insure against some of the most common causes of income loss to which working people are subject, it cannot be considered as more than a first step towards America's goal of social security. But it has been a highly successful first step. And ten years have proved that the principle of social insurance is sound when applied to the American system of free enterprise and cooperation.

Now that we are certain that our first step was in the right direction, we should take further steps along the same lines to ensure that all American families will have basic protection against the major hazards which threaten their security.

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I should like to describe for you the principal features of a comprehensive, unified program for social security, built upon the ground-work of our present limited programs. A more detailed blueprint for such a program has been introduced in the Senate by Senator Wagner and myself and in the House by Representative Dingell.

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The federal program of old-age and survivors insurance now covers only persons who work for wages or salaries in industry and commerce. The main groups excluded are agricultural wage workers, domestic servants, public employees, employees of educational, charitable and other non-profit organizations, and self-employed business and professional persons, including operators of small businesses and farmers. All of these groups —which together number perhaps 20 million persons—as well as those covered are subject to the risks of premature death and dependency in old age. Among the excluded segments of the population we find some of the workers whose employment conditions are the most uncertain, whose pay is the lowest and who, in consequence, are the least able to safeguard themselves and their families through individual effort.

Exclusion of these employments from coverage has left many workers without protection which they badly need. It has caused large numbers of them who occasionally work in occupations now covered by the program to make some contribution to the system without obtaining sufficient credit to enable them to qualify for benefits. Moreover, all of them, as consumers, are undoubtedly carrying a share of the cost of the social insurance program since at least a substantial part of the contribution paid by employers in industry and commerce is pushed forward into prices which all must pay—the non-insured and the insured alike.

Administrative problems, which were primarily responsible for postponement of the coverage of these groups, have now been solved in the light of ten years' experience in operating a social insurance program. There is no justification, therefore, for further delay in extending old-age and survivors protection to virtually all gainfully employed workers in the nation.

Extension of coverage would be advantageous not only to the newly-covered groups but to all workers already included in the present system. We are a nation with a mobile labor force. Many workers in the course of a working life-time shift back and forth between types of employment now covered and those not now covered. This results in disqualifying many from insurance benefits; it also reduces the earnings which can be credited toward benefits and reduces the average wage that is calculated. It thus lowers the amount of the payment to which the worker is entitled upon retiring, or to which his widow and orphans are entitled upon his death. Only if the coverage of our system is as broad as possible can a worker take advantage of opportunities which enable him to move from job to job without a break in his insurance protection or a reduction in future benefits.

By failing to credit military service toward old-age and survivor's wage-credits, the present social security law has seriously penalized the millions of young men and women who served in our armed forces. Under the provisions of the new bill, servicemen who had never worked in employment covered by the program, as well as those who had built up benefit rights in previous years, would be given retroactive credit for the entire period of their military service. This would be an act of justice to service men and the cost would be borne by the Federal Government out of general revenues. Veterans would thus have full and immediate protection against civilian hazards—protection which they could not obtain in any other way.

We propose also a number of changes and liberalizations to make benefits more adequate and to increase the protection of the old-age and survivors' insurance program. With these improvements, old-age and survivor's insurance can realize to the fullest its major rôle in securing the future of American workers and their families.

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In turning to the subject of employment security let me focus your attention upon the social insurance program of unemployment compensation. But first, I wish to make quite clear that social security—no matter how comprehensive and adequate—cannot substitute for full employment. Jobs for all our workers is the best safeguard of freedom and economic security for the American people. However, when suitable work is lacking, unemployment compensation is a first line of defense. It is important that our program should provide a truly adequate defense.

I have been interested in statements to the effect that the more we strengthen our unemployment compensation program, the more we encourage workers to draw unemployment benefits instead of taking jobs. I grant that this would be a very sad commentary on social insurance if it were backed up by facts. Let us look at the principal argument used to support the contention that workers would rather receive compensation for loafing than pay for working. This argument usually takes the form of a comparison of the total number of unemployed beneficiaries with the total number of job openings, for the nation as a whole, for a state or perhaps for a single city. Such a comparison of totals is both meaningless

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and misleading in that it completely ignores the fact that workers are human beings who differ widely in their personal characteristics, skills and experience. I have seen the results of local labor market studies which go beyond these totals. They show, for instance, that in one city almost four-fifths of the claimants for benefits were women whereas slightly more than four-fifths of the available jobs were open to men only. Further breakdown of the characteristics of the jobless and of the job specifications of the employers piles up the evidence to refute the contention that jobs go begging simply because of the worker's preference for compensated idleness.

Placement of a worker in a job which utilizes his highest skills is to the advantage of the employer and to our entire national economy, as well as to the financial and psychological advantage of the individual worker and his family. An adequate system of public employment offices serves to bring workers and suitable jobs together as rapidly as possible. Obviously this matching process does not always occur instantaneously. And so, in order that a worker will not be forced by dire necessity to take the first job that opens up, regardless of suitability, he needs a benefit sufficient for maintenance during a reasonable period of searching for a job which will match his maximum ability.

We are now in a period of nationwide reconversion. Returned servicemen and members of the civilian labor force are matching their job skills to peacetime uses. During this period we need the strongest possible bulwark of protection. And if, thereafter, we reach our goal of full employment, we still will not have eliminated all wage loss from temporary unemployment. It is generally estimated that even in a fully active and smoothly functioning labor market, about 2 to 4 percent of the civilian labor force is unemployed, at any one time. What steps should we take to ensure that our unemployment compensation program is well adapted to the demands of both nation-wide reconversion and nation-wide full employment?

Our present unemployment compensation program is divided into 51 separate state and territorial systems which vary widely in their provisions. During the past year or two, a number of states have revised their unemployment compensation laws to make them somewhat more adequate for the tasks ahead. But these changes have been too limited and have not succeeded in eliminating inadequacies in amounts and durations of benefits. I am convinced that if we are to meet adequately the demands of nation-wide reconversion and of full employment, we must merge our present separate state systems into one national system, providing more adequate protection — and protection equally available — to workers in all parts of the country.

We shall also need, during the reconversion period and thereafter a well-coordinated national system of employment offices on a permanent basis. The tremendous geographical shifting of workers during the war years, now going on in reverse, strongly accentuated the mobile character of our labor force. At no time in our history have workers been deterred in their search for jobs by the artificial barriers of state lines. In a highly industrialized and widespread economy such as ours, only a national employment service can effectively appraise the entire national labor market and bring workers and jobs together, wherever they exist throughout the nation.

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We have made a successful beginning toward the goal of providing protection against loss of earnings due to old age, unemployment or the premature death of the breadwinner. Our efforts in these fields should now be directed toward improving our technique and extending protection to other groups of workers. But we have not yet begun to provide an adequate solution to our problem of sickness and resultant disability—the major causes, aside from periods of mass unemployment, of poverty among American families.

It is estimated that on an average day, in a pre-war year, about 7 million persons in the United States were so disabled by sickness or injury that they could not carry on their usual pursuits. Nearly half of these would have been in paid jobs, or looking for such jobs, except for their incapacity. In ordinary years, loss of earnings from temporary disability, including the loss of persons who during the year shift from the labor force to the group of permanently disabled, amounts to some three to four billion dollars.

Of the 7 million persons disabled on an average day, about half have been incapacitated for 6 months or more, the period commonly used in classifying disability as "permanent" or "extended" for social insurance purposes. In its effect on the earning power of the worker, permanent disability closely resembles old age because it frequently results in permanent retirement from the labor market. In its effect on family security, however, permanent disability may have even more serious consequences than does old age, in that disability may strike during youth or middle age when family responsibilities are greatest and before there has been opportunity to accumulate savings. A comprehensive social insurance program should, therefore, provide cash benefits—similar in amount to old-age benefits—to compensate for the earnings loss which results from long-term or permanent disability.

The wage loss which results from the tempo-

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rary disability of the breadwinner resembles that which results from temporary unemployment. It may, however, work an even greater hardship on the family because of the additional expenses which illness commonly brings. Because both temporary disability and temporary unemployment involve relatively brief periods of wage loss, temporary disability insurance might be geared into a national program for unemployment insurance, with similar provisions as to workers covered and as to amount and duration of benefits.

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A program of cash benefits to replace earnings lost during a sickness or disability is only part of the solution to the problem of attaining health security. We also need a solution to the problem of paying for medical care—a solution which will remove the financial barrier now standing between families and the medical care they need. (There is no space here to outline this essential element in any real national social security program: health insurance for all.)

There are some who say we cannot afford so comprehensive a social security program. That is economic nonsense; and I say that we cannot afford to be without it. We have always met these costs, whether through individual sacrifice to pay large doctor bills or to support dependent relatives, through taxation to finance relief programs, or otherwise. The contributions levied under social security represent, in the main, a method of distributing the burden of these already existing costs among all members of society through relatively small regular payments.

A social security program which enables all gainfully employed persons to pay for basic security for themselves and their families, purchasing or accumulating privately such additional security as they want or can afford, is democratic.

Our democracy can thrive only when it adequately respects and preserves the dignity of the common people. Ours is and will be a democracy of the common people, or it will be hard put to survive. Only by strengthening and upholding the economic freedom and self-respect of the individual and the family can we strengthen and uphold democracy against the world-wide challenge of communism and socialism.

Trotsky and Kravchenko

Waldemar Gurian

VERY ASTONISHING is the fact that Victor Kravchenko's book "I Chose Freedom" (Scribner, $3.50) is regarded by many as a surprising revelation of the conditions prevailing in the Soviet Union, and bitterly attacked by others as an unreliable report by a disappointed Soviet official, full of exaggerations, slanders and resentment. Kravchenko is not the first member of the Russian Communist Party to turn against the Soviet Union, picturing it as a vast prison inhabited by unhappy masses and dominated by dangerous and ruthless intriguers, interested exclusively in power politics and their own welfare. There was, for example, the book by Bazhanov, a member of Stalin's secretariat. There was the story of Agabekov, a leading official of the Cheka, which was supplemented by the volume of Dumbadse, a minor official of the Soviet Secret Police. There were the revelations of Bessedowski, the counselor of the Soviet Embassy in Paris, who saved himself from a purge by jumping over the wall of the embassy. And American readers have not yet forgotten the memoirs of Krivitsky, a leading Soviet "intelligence" agent, and of Barmine, who ended his Soviet career as Minister to Greece.

Has V. Kravchenko's book a particular value, resulting from a special, new and fresh approach? This volume is of some interest because it is written by a man who did not play a policy-making rôle, but who is representative of communist Soviet specialists. He joined the party manifestly in order to make his career as a specialist in engineering and to play a rôle in the Soviet planned economy. What Kravchenko tells is the story of the average party member, though he reached positions high above the average as head of important enterprises and as a technician working in the central government, having an office in the Kremlin. He pictures himself as the son of a revolutionary, rather well educated worker in the Ukraine. His father, surprisingly, never joined any political group or party, though he was jailed under the Czarist régime. He did not even join the Bolsheviks after they came into power, though he was hopeful that the younger Soviet generation might "succeed in bringing true freedom and a better life for the masses."

The circumstances under which young Kravchenko became, after some adventures as a member of the Red Army in Asia, a party member are not clearly stated. Kravchenko mentions a

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speech of Rakovsky, the friend of Trotsky, "early in 1929" which caused him to apply for membership in the party. "It was almost the last time that an enemy of Stalin would be permitted to talk to the people." It is impossible that Rakovsky, excluded from the party and exiled in 1927, would have been permitted to deliver speeches criticizing Stalin's régime in 1929. Somewhat surprising also are Kravchenko's stories about his relations, as an obscure student, with the wife of a leading communist and about his friendship with Ordschonikidse, member of the Polit Bureau, the highest board of the Communist Party, and the very influential Commissar of Heavy Industry. It is astonishing that Kravchenko did not achieve a more spectacular career, since he had the protection of one of the most intimate collaborators of Stalin. Ordschonikidse is, by the way, pictured in a much too favorable light; he may have opposed Stalin's purge of specialists during the last period of his life, but previously he had participated in most brutal and inhumane actions (e.g., in Georgia).

It must be noted, too, that the general political judgments of Kravchenko are not too revealing. For example, he attacks bitterly the catastrophic lack of preparation with which the leaders of the USSR entered the war after having been attacked by Hitler in 1941; but then he mentions that Russia won the Battle of Stalingrad before the effect of Lend-Lease could be felt. That the book cannot be regarded as an historical work is proved by the many conversations which are repeated word for word. It is obvious that these restatements cannot be correct; they can merely attempt to picture the general conditions under which the speakers met.

But despite all doubts evoked by some passages and also by Kravchenko's inclination to tell in a rather dull, sentimental way about his adventures with various women, it can be said that the picture of life in the USSR as presented by the former Soviet expert looks true. The moving description of the hunger in the Ukrainian villages produced by the imposed collectivization is an excellent illustration of the ruthless methods of a totalitarian régime. Kravchenko's detailed description of the purges inside the party and of his troubles with the GPU confirm many other descriptions of the Stalin régime. This régime has abolished the inviolability of party members—they were, during the great purge, even objects of particularly intense suspicion. So many examples of incompetence, illiteracy and inhumanity are presented by Kravchenko that the reader will ask the question: How can this régime work and last? Kravchenko's remarks on the leaders of the USSR are very disappointing. He describes, for example, how Stalin, Kaganovitch, Molotov, etc., are masters in the art of "cussing," and then adds somewhat unexpectedly: "I can attest, however, that the great majority of the leaders with whom I came in contact were able men who knew their business; dynamic men deeply devoted to the work in hand."

Kravchenko's political analysis, for example, of the world revolutionary aims of Stalin's régime, will appear as particularly weak to those who have read books of such anti-Soviet students of the USSR as D. Dallin. It is a pity that the unnamed helper of Kravchenko who "edited the English text from an American vantage point" following "faithfully [the] original Russian manuscript," did not advise the author to concentrate exclusively on daily life in the Soviet Union. I think that the political conclusions might have been left to the readers themselves.

But even in its present form, the memoirs of Kravchenko contribute to the understanding of the Soviet régime as a totalitarian régime, imposing industrialization from above, operating with an inefficient and inexperienced personnel, trying to correct its mistakes by ruthlessness and terror, dominated by men so convinced of the correctness of their political views and beliefs that they are willing to sacrifice everything to them. Particularly illuminating are Kravchenko's accounts of the brutal fights and conflicts inside the party, on the activities of the GPU against the specialists, even though they might be party members.

The positive political ideas of Kravchenko are as noble as they are vague; it is somewhat surprising that he, though himself a Ukrainian, is opposed to Ukrainian nationalism and sides rather with a Great Russian nationalism.

★

Kravchenko remained, despite his party membership and his important technical jobs, outside the group which shaped the policy of the dictatorial sole party. During the first years of the Soviet régime, L. Trotsky was, after Lenin, the most important figure in this group. But he did not become Lenin's successor. Almost all the other lieutenants of the founder of the Bolshevik party were against Trotsky. Among these lieutenants, Stalin soon became the most powerful. Not only was Trotsky defeated, but likewise such men as Kamenev and Zinoviev, men who had first believed that they could use Stalin as a tool in order to undermine and eliminate the influence of the Commissar for War. When Trotsky was assassinated in 1941, he was working on a biography of his underestimated and despised but successful rival. This biography has been supplemented by some appendices, tables and indices by Charles Malameth; the book was ready in 1941,

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but thanks to the war, its publication has been delayed until now.

It must be said that Trotsky's book, "Stalin" (Harper, $5.00) will not supersede B. Souvarine's "Stalin," whose French original was published in 1936 and which was translated in 1939. (Souvarine's most valuable bibliography is omitted in the American edition; a supplementary chapter is not as good as the other parts. It remains a mystery why Souvarine does not now publish a new edition of his biography, brought up to date.) Trotsky is not able to picture the life of Stalin against the background of Russian history; he is too much interested in the internal conflicts of the socialist movement, and he succeeds only rarely in showing the general importance of these fights and polemics (as, for example, in his own analysis of Lenin's defeatism.)

I doubt whether this fault, which makes the book difficult reading for those not too well acquainted with the history of the Russian revolutionary movement, arises from the fact that Trotsky lived to complete only the first seven chapters, covering Stalin's life up to the Bolshevik's rise to power (November, 1919). The other chapters describing his behavior under Lenin's régime and his becoming master of the party and thereby of the Soviet Union have been put in final form by the editor, who also added various other supplements using Trotsky's notes. But even if Trotsky had been able to complete the book, its fundamental deficiency would have remained.

Trotsky set out to try to prove that Stalin's career is incompatible with the principles of Bolshevism. Stalin is a skillful manipulator of the party machine "without association of the masses." "Stalin did not create the machine," as Lenin had done, "but took possession of it. For this, exceptional and special qualities were necessary." Trotsky attempts to show his objectivity by recognizing some virtues in Stalin, by rejecting some attempts to smear him without proofs, but, on the other hand, he is always eager to emphasize that Stalin understood neither the socialist movement nor Lenin, nor the real aims of the Soviet régime. That is a hopeless enterprise, as Trotsky's own restatement of some facts demonstrates. Young Stalin was taken very seriously by Lenin; Lenin supervised closely Stalin's study on the National Question; the little-known professional revolutionary, Stalin, was, despite previous disagreements, practically appointed by Lenin himself as member of the Central Committee in 1912.

★

The decisive argument of Trotsky against Stalin consists in the observation that Stalin was very little known before and after 1917, until he became master of the party machine. But does that prove anything? It proves only that Stalin must be a particularly able organizer and politician. He succeeded, for instance, in making the position of Secretary General, which had previously been none too important, into a key position.

There were, of course, differences between Lenin and Stalin. Lenin was much better educated than Stalin; he had not suffered as much as Stalin from petty frustrations. His authority, though often challenged earlier, became definitely established in 1917-18, thanks to his having succeeded in bringing the Bolshevik Party, whose founder he was, into power. Stalin had been too long one of the lieutenants of Lenin; therefore other sub-leaders, particularly the externally more brilliant ones, could not and did not accept his authority without resentment and angry surprise. But the fundamental conceptions and attitudes of Lenin were taken over by Stalin, and flexibly adapted to changing conditions. Lenin himself realized after 1917 that the hopes for an immediate world revolution were wrong and that the maintenance of the Soviet régime at all costs was the most important task. Lenin could overcome opposition in communistic ranks without too much trouble, whereas Stalin had, in order to maintain his power, to abolish the inviolability of communists. The same methods were now applied against them that had been applied from the beginning of the régime against all non-communists. The ruthlessness of the régime is not due to some exceptional trait of Stalin, corresponding to bureaucratic deviations among his supporters, but to its basic conceptions—the dictatorship of the proletariat, whose advance guard is the Bolshevik Communist Party, which may use all means in order to fulfil its world-historic mission. Trotsky himself became one of the victims of the same principles in the name of which he had exercised power. It is therefore a decisive weakness of his book that he attacks Stalin without realizing that his adversary had merely used more skilfully and with a better judgment of concrete situations the principles which Trotsky himself continued to hold until his death.

There are many interesting details in the book. Though it is not too well written—other books by Trotsky are much more brilliant—it contains some well-pointed formulations. "Indeed, it is easier to imagine him [Stalin] placing traps at night than firing a gun at a bird in flight." Some will be surprised to hear about the rôle which Stalin's first wife—as Trotsky scornfully remarks, a pious Christian woman—played in the development of his character. Trotsky is right in pointing out the many suppressions and falsifications which are to be found in the Soviet historiog-

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raphy. The defense of his rôle in the October revolution and the Civil War is in many ways convincing. His view of Stalin as a man who is neither a writer nor an orator but a slow-moving machine politician, respecting power and despising theories—though he would like to be a great Marxian theorist—is impressive but does not present the whole picture. He underestimates Stalin's gift of grasping the meaning of complicated trends. Stalin has even been able to control his own will to revenge and his own hates until it was politically safe to satisfy them. The whole characterization of Stalin suffers from Trotsky's incapacity even to raise the question: Were not certain of Stalin's traits nourished by the methods and political views of the party, views not created by him but intensifying his will to power, his inclination to disregard human lives and ethical considerations, his mechanistic concept of men and humanity? Was it not necessary that the totalitarian sole-party fall under the unlimited control of a boss, who would at the same time be cautious and daring, ruthless and apparently insignificant? Did not Trotsky, by his policy of creating and justifying terrorism against real and potential adversaries, create the basis for terror inside the party? Does he not overestimate his gifts as a writer and orator and underestimate Stalin?

Trotsky's book attacks Stalin's psychology; precisely here is its limitation. The basic policies remained unquestioned: the totalitarian character of Stalin's USSR is, for Trotsky, a "bureaucratic deviation" and a result of decay because wrong men came into power expressing the will of wrong groups (bureaucrats, party officials, etc.). But had this accident not taken place, the Soviet régime would be all right. Trotsky is, on the one hand, a determinist—everything is justified that helps development in the right direction—on the other hand, he believes in tragic accidents, such as the fact that Stalin, not he, became Lenin's heir. And he tries to show how this accident is the result of a combination of mediocrity and evil character. But even if Stalin remained during Lenin's whole life unknown to the masses, could he only by chance have advanced slowly but steadily in the ranks of the party? Trotsky's book does not prove that this career was an accident. After all, Stalin was an old Bolshevik, and it is a futile attempt to disassociate him from Lenin and the party which came into power in the October revolution of 1917. Stalin represents the average worker of the party, whereas Trotsky was its most brilliant outsider, overestimating his personal gifts and underestimating the importance of inconspicuous organizational work. It is wrong to see the issue between Trotsky and Stalin as having anything to do with more or less brutality and ruthlessness. Both Trotsky and Stalin never hesitated to apply terror and to exterminate adversaries if they deemed it necessary for the maintenance and increase of their power. Stalin eliminated Trotsky because he had the masses of the party machinery behind him, and the party machinery had, with the effective help of Trotsky, supplanted the will of the people and concentrated in itself the whole life of society. Therefore, the duel between Stalin and Trotsky, in which the brilliant writer was killed and the dull organizer survived, is an internal Bolshevik affair. The terminological and tactical differences did not matter, only success mattered. And though Stalin is "neither a thinker, nor a writer, nor an orator," he knew how to achieve success in the field of power politics.

Conference in Washington

HARRY LORIN BINSSE

AS A duly constituted delegate for an organization whose name is quite beside the point, I recently journeyed to Washington for a conference the purpose of which was to register protest and to suggest action with regard to our country's shipments of food to starving peoples in famine-stricken lands throughout the world. It began with an afternoon session intended to clarify the reasons for passing a number of resolutions with which we were all in agreement anyhow, and I cannot pretend that this session was particularly thrilling. Meetings the outcome of which is known beforehand are never as much fun —however worthy they may be—as meetings which promise and deliver a few good arguments. In this case none were promised and none arose—except when the representative of one religious body pointed out that his constituency would not wish to place any specific blame on the fertilizer industry or on the food processing industry, since to do so might be construed as radical.

But what was interesting was to analyze the natures of the various groups which had sent delegates to register their earnest protest at our defalcations and to urge policies—especially the restoration of rationing—which would make such failures less likely in the future. It should be added that during the evening of the same day a public session was held, at which not only delegates but also several hundred interested citizens were present. The inducement to attend this session consisted in an admirably managed radio program that brought it to a close. The star performers were bushy-eyebrowed, Independent Laborite Sir John Boyd Orr and our own dynamic bantam, the ex-Mayor of New York. After this

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forum went off the air, the Little Flower answered questions from the floor—and handled himself and them with superb showmanship. Thus plenty of opportunity was given for political "lines" to be expressed. And it was not without significance that at neither the afternoon nor the evening session—with the possible exception of one of the questions asked La Guardia—was there any hint that any communist was present. Evidently that Party Line is not at present concerned over famine or starvation.

Who, then, were present? I should say that by far the most numerous group consisted of representatives of various Protestant bodies, and especially of the smaller and less powerful. One would expect the Brethren and the Quakers to be there on the basis of their records. Naturally the Federal Council of Churches and the Unitarians would not be absent. But in addition to these there must have been twenty or thirty more persons, characterized by a certain decent solemnity of behavior, representing other religious groups. The Catholics had only one delegate —at least as far as I was able to ascertain. The rest of those present—and among them I recognized more faces I knew than among the others—consisted very nearly entirely of men and women who in French could generally be described as *socialisants*. We have no equivalent word. People, you might say, who generally tend toward some sort of socialist solution for economic and political problems, but at various levels, differing greatly in radicalism. There were boys and girls out of Dubinsky's union. There were labor union officials of the Reuther stripe. There were full-fledged members of the Socialist Party and those who prefer the label "Social Democrat." There were Farmers Union folk and cooperators. Here was, in brief, a cross section of the same interests in the United States as have in Canada cooperatively built up the CCF.

But what particularly interested me was the talk with these people after the first session in the bar of the National Press Club. There I, though officially a delegate of a group without religious affiliations, was regarded and welcomed entirely as a Catholic by people eager to work with Catholics—and with all Christians—and convinced of a community of purpose. That was the burden of the talk. Experience with nearly thirty years of communism had taught them the need for personal morality. Socialists must reappraise their ancient prejudices, they said, for if there could not be a working alliance between all those concerned over human freedom as well as a better organized world, the game is up. . . . And I could not help reflecting upon the needless yet rigid iron curtains existing in our midst, which could so easily be melted away with a minimum of heat and a very few blow torches.

Communications

ON PREJUDICE

Newark, N. J.

TO the Editors: Father Trese is to be highly commended for writing such a frank and straightforward statement, "On Prejudice" (May 17); and THE COMMONWEAL is to be complimented for publishing it. I sincerely wish that many church leaders, Protestants as well as Catholics, could see things as clearly as Father Trese does and also have the courage to say them.

It seems to me that much of the misunderstanding and ill will that exists between the branches of Christendom is due to the common practice of saying one thing and meaning another. When we show the sincerity which this writer displays and are strictly honest with our own thinking, many of the clouds that now befog the American scene will disappear.

If the Catholic Church is guilty of "a warped psychology," I feel quite safe in saying that so are the Protestant Churches and with the same kind of a "warp." It seems that all of us on both sides of this issue need a little more of the Christian graces of humility and charitableness in our thinking and relation to each other. I am glad that Father Trese emphasized this point, for I believe it is fundamental.

As a Protestant minister born into that tradition, I sincerely rejoice at the tenor of this article and wish to say to you and its author "thank you."

WALLACE L. GALLUP,
Regional Director,
National Conference of Christians and Jews.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

TO the Editors: I heartily applaud Father Trese's article, it is a mighty weapon against militant bigotry.

ANTHONY J. GOREN.

River Forest, Ills.

TO the Editors: This is a word to thank you for the article by Father Trese in the Inner Forum in the issue of May 17. Not in a long time have I read such wise and fearless comments. I hope there will be widespread distribution of these remarks. Will you have some off-prints? The articles by Father Dunne, too, are splendid. And I thank you for the Loughlin article on Catholic political immorality.

God bless and prosper you.

SISTER THOMAS AQUINAS.

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: Congratulations to Father Trese for writing "On Prejudice" and to you for publishing it in your issue for May 17. It is encouraging and heartening to see such an article from one of our priests, and to know that we have THE COMMONWEAL to give it publicity. Please give us more things like this.

WALTER A. TROY.

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Boonton, N. J.

TO the Editors: I enclose this renewal with real pleasure. Aside from your general excellence, the articles, "Boston's Political Morals," "The Short Case," "The Lights Went Out" and "On Prejudice" were alone worth the price of my trial subscription.

There is a direct connection between Father Trese's comments on the Catholic press and the situations and events described. The failure of our banal diocesan press to come to grips with the fundamental Christian issues tolerates the existence of un-Christian aspects in our nation's life.

The Kremlin is safe as long as we fail to implement our diatribes with Catholic action in this country.

Keep up the good fight.

JAMES W. PHELAN.

THE NAKED "INNOCENTS"

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: We wish to express our appreciation of your editorial in the current issue re the shameful conditions in our public mental "hospitals." While the *Life* magazine article covered Byberry, Pennsylvania, the disease reflected by the symptoms illustrated is epidemic throughout all the states of the union, my own included.

The enclosed copy of one of our Special Educational News Letters, issued last February, will give you an idea of the real causes (and roots) of the troubles. We published the special educational number while the legislature was in session for the purpose of securing an increase in the food appropriations for patients. We mailed copies to every state senator and assemblyman and to the editor of every newspaper in the state, all by first class mail and accompanied by a special personal letter.

The disease alluded to above, as illustrated by *Life's* article, lies primarily in disorders of administration, *maladministration,* allowed to flourish by the apathy of the people at large. Church people are greatly to blame—for their failure to see to it that the tens of thousands of these least of His brethren be at least regarded, and treated, as human beings, which at present they are not. I speak of the tens of thousands because in this state we have more than 100,000 in our 26 institutions.

Most of these mental "hospitals" have hundreds of acres of attractive grounds surrounding them. Yet patients are herded in over-crowded, locked wards with barred windows. Not one building housing patients has an acre of land for patients' therapeutic use, or a recreation area contiguous to the building and freely and safely accessible.

And surely it is not only a principle universally recognized by medical men but one also recognized by lay people that wholesome recreation is a great healing agent for nerves and minds as well as bodies. And please be assured I am only speaking of patients who are *not* dangerous to themselves or others. These are in the great majority, contrary to popular notions.

Should you manage to find time and energy to read the enclosed publication of ours you will get a fair idea of the shameful, and so needless, neglect and abuse inflicted on the helpless, virtually immured patients.

The favorite alibi of the guilty is the war; but they perpetrated these crimes for years before the war.

Again congratulating and thanking you for having added your voice in defense of these forsaken victims,

JOHN B. ERIT,
Chairman, Patients' Welfare Committee,
Association for the Improvement of
Conditions in Mental Hospitals.

ANNE FREMANTLE

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: Congratulations to you on Anne Fremantle. She is so frightfully, delightfully clever that, no matter what the subject may be, to read her is a rare literary treat. So rare indeed that I feel I may say it aloud.

M. SUMNER.

ITALY IN THE WAR

Toronto, Canada.

TO the Editors: According to a former member of the P.W.B. in Italy, the following figures have been given in relation to Italy's war effort for the Allied cause. I was reminded of this in reading your article a few weeks ago on the resistance movement. These are official figures of the Italian Government:

(1) In Cefalonia and Corfu 16,000 officers and men fell fighting the Germans or were massacred in cold blood after the surrender. (2) 540,000 soldiers, betrayed by their generals, refused to collaborate with the nazis and were sent to concentration camps in Germany—33,000 died of ill-treatment and starvation. (3) From September 8, 1943, onward, the Italian Army fighting the Germans lost 20,432 killed, 19,171 missing in action, 11,628 wounded. (4) The Italian Navy carried out 64 war missions, and 335 special missions. Italian ships escorted 1,587 Allied convoys, totaling 10,617 ships. Mine sweepers and anti-submarine units covered more than 400,000 miles (unofficial losses were 5,500). (5) The remnants of the Italian Air Forces carried out over 4,000 missions, with 11,000 sorties, and dropped over 7,000 bombs. (6) The Partisan armed bands grew to 170,000 men. They lost 26,000 killed, 23,000 missing—many suffering indescribable torture. (7) 17,243 civilians, including women and children, were killed by nazi-fascists in reprisals (11,881 of them in mass executions). 8,337 civilians were sent to German concentration camps. (8) At least 50,000 Allied PW's were fed, clothed and sheltered by Italians, in spite of the penalty of death.

This is written that people may know of the tremendous effort made by the Italian people for the Allied cause and in the hope that these brave men obtain for their country the prize for which they gave their lives, unhesitatingly—pardon for the past and friendly understanding in the days to come.

O. J. BONDY.

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AN APPEAL

FROM time to time we have published in these columns the names and addresses of various religious houses in Europe which we know to be desperately in need of material help, especially of food packages. The readers of THE COMMONWEAL have been most generous in their response to these appeals. The need, however, is a continuing one. Food packages and money are urgently required, and may be sent direct to any of the addresses given below. Any funds sent to us will at once be used to help various communities abroad which we know are particularly in need of help.

We have recently been asked to call the attention of our readers to the straits of French seminarians, particularly of those in the major seminary at Poitiers. Some 140 young men studying for the priesthood there have substantially no clothing and insufficient food to preserve them from the ravages of tuberculosis. If any reader would like to assist them during the difficult months to come, he may do so very readily by adopting one of the 14 tables into which they are divided in their dining room. Each of these tables seats 10 seminarians and has a chief in charge of provisions. Food packages may be addressed:

Le Séminariste Chef de la Table No. 1 (etc. through 14)
Grand Séminaire de Poitiers
Vienne, France

In order to avoid duplication it is suggested that any reader wishing to adopt one of these tables inform THE COMMONWEAL of his intention so that the number of a table may be assigned to him.

The seminarians are badly in need of any sort of cloth suitable for making clothes, and are likewise almost without funds for the purchase of current literature so necessary in the pursuit of their studies.

An appeal has likewise been made to us on behalf of another Carmelite Convent in Italy not included among those listed in our issue of March 29. The address is:

Monastero delle Carmelitane
Via de' Massoni 26
Trespiano per Careggi
Florence, Italy

Catholic schools in France, which are not given assistance by the government, are generally suffering badly. One which we know needs assistance is:

Ecole Libre du Cormenier
par Beauvoir-sur-Niort
Deux Sèvres, France

In this school a single teacher not only has to handle all the instruction but likewise has to feed 22 of the pupils who are completely without resources.

Finally we supply the address of a convent in Rome well known to many Americans because of the work done by this order in the education of American girls. Here again both money and food will be deeply welcomed.

Convent of the Holy Child
10 via Boncompagni
Rome, Italy

THE EDITORS.

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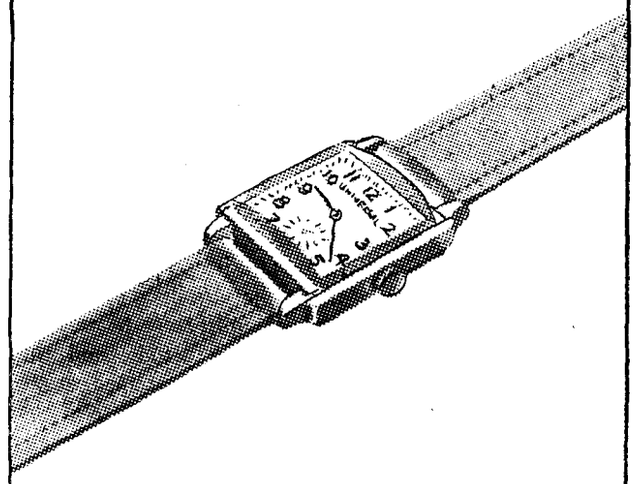

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The Stage & Screen

Oedipus with The Critic

THE Old Vic's double bill, matching classic tragedy with Sheridan's hilarious parody of the eighteenth century version of the same, provides one of the most vivid evenings I have ever spent in the theater, and certainly one of the most interesting. As I have not been able, by hook, crook, or trek, to secure a copy of the Yeats adaptation of the Sophocles, which is the one used, it is unfair to try comparisons, but it is my guess that aside from some trimming of the chorus's lines (I may be wrong here) there is no structural difference between it and the Gilbert Murray arrangement. This, and the language of course, which for some reason seemed to me to ring out in the familiar Yeatsean imagery more in the latter half, as the catastrophe fell. I think it is the concentration of the Greek form (particularly in Sophocles), the whole exploration of a single event, which is most amazing to the modern mind. Time is not signified, it is the length of the play. And as this exploration includes even more of heaven than of earth, everything is told, everything begun is resolved. Certainly in this conflict of the gods and the proud Cadmean King, there is no arguing Aristotle's desired "terror and pity." Terror and pity are the audience's portion from beginning to end; there is absolutely nothing else to feel.

For performance, again I am unable to compare as I have never seen any unmodified (unsymbolized, unfiddled) Greek tragedy acted before. Nevertheless, both the staging by Michel Saint-Denis and all of the playing seemed to me very fine. Laurence Olivier's Oedipus is first of course, and I am bound to report that he seemed to me as exactly beautiful and horrifying as necessary. It is true, one gradually declines in adjectives trying to describe a good actor; it is probably simpler immediately to say he is the best. I'm afraid I am far too fancy to be able to consider this attack, but I will say that I think all of the interested should seize their offspring, squash them into any available seat at the New Century, beat them over the head, and cry *NOW!* Severely.

With the Sheridan, it is (I'm sorry) necessary to introduce Mr. Olivier again: as Mr. Puff, with most of the lines, most of the laughs, a new nose, and a lovely final curtain. I think the intensity of wit in this small piece almost perfectly opposes the prior Sophoclean concentration; so much so that the evening becomes, in a way, *work* for the house. Participation becomes necessary; to sit back, even for a moment, means you have lost something. And while this is certainly an un-American procedure, my notes record roars and cheers. The farce, play-within-a-play stuff, wonderfully travesties the heroic tragedy of the times on its inner stage; outlines the modern advertising tangle on its outer one; and successfully reduces my own particular job to a lower-case c. "O lud, yes, sir!" Mr. Puff answers in response to a question as to the worth of theatrical criticism, "the number of those who undergo the fatigue of judging for themselves is very small indeed." Which, by the way, drew the longest of the boffs from the house. I thought Tanya Moiseiwitsch's scenery and costumes delightful; Margaret Leighton's Mr. Dangle neat and charming; George Rose's Sir Christopher Hatton really funny; Michael Raghan's hoarse Earl of Leicester very funny; Nicolette Bernard's mad Tilburnia marvelously funny. As for Mr. Olivier's "practitioner in panegyric," please see above.

I guess I like Sheridan; I guess I like the Old Vic. The puff's direct. (*Theater Incorporated, at the New Century.*)

Swan Song

THE NIGHT I saw it, the play's authors, Charles MacArthur and Ben Hecht, had one of their chief characters, a music critic, step forward at the curtain call to plead with the public to support their offering and thereby "kill the critics." Well, as the critics, *no less than the playwrights,* are being nightly killed on Fifty-ninth Street by an Irishman who, although dead, never needed a doctor, I think it's about time everyone, particularly these two stalwarts, got back to work. (*At the Booth.*)

KAPPO PHELAN.

Woman's Home Is in the Place

A FEW weeks ago in reviewing the latest Bette Davis opus, "A Stolen Life," I said that it is what is referred to generally as a woman's picture. By this I meant nothing more malicious than that its story is told from a woman's point of view. "A Stolen Life" is a specially apt example not only because events are seen mainly through the eyes of the heroine (Miss Davis as the good twin) but also because the men are so vague that they are merely types as conceived by a woman. I don't know whether the film makers themselves, or the female audiences who flock to the movies, or the critics who use such phrases are responsible for the label; but in any case a so-called woman's picture is usually a weepy affair.

The heroine of *"Young Widow"* returns to Virginia after her husband's death in the war because this is where she and he were so happy. But everything reminds her of him, so she goes to New York, shares an apartment with two other girls and spends most of her time warding off the attentions of various men. Since Jane Russell (whose first film, "The Outlaw," has been more publicized than seen) plays the young widow with emphasis on glamor rather than depth of character, it is natural that the men who pursue her would also be shallow. Foremost among them is Louis Hayward, a saucy and cynical lieutenant in the air force, who from time to time seems to be getting somewhere with Jane; but she keeps remembering her husband at the oddest moments—frequently with the help of the picture's theme song. The film, which is very talky and marked by feeble situations and attempts at pseudo-sophisticated dialogue, really gets nowhere and ends with nothing settled in an absurd scene

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showing Louis flying to the Pacific while Jane waves good-bye. The supporting cast of this feminine picture is more impressive than the leads, particularly Faith Domergue portraying a girl afraid of marriage and of becoming a widow if her fiancé joins the army, and Penny Singleton as the wife who welcomes back her legless husband.

The heroine of *"To Each His Own"* is neither wife nor widow; for the father of her child flew away to the war and was killed before there was any talk of marriage. All this is told in an exceedingly long flashback which shows how the woman suffers and pays. What keeps the sentimental story from being just an orgy of lavender and old lace are the first-rate performance of Olivia DeHavilland in the lead, the good supporting cast and the sincere direction of Mitchell Leisen. Middle-aged in 1944, Miss Norris (DeHavilland) sits in a London railroad station, waiting to get a glimpse of her son, remembering the years since the last war. Producer Charles Brackett (who also wrote the script with Jacques Thery) has faithfully reconstructed the atmosphere of a small 1918 American town, and we are made to feel the excitement of a girl with two suitors (Bill Goodwin and Phillip Terry) who falls for the attentions of a handsome airplane pilot (John Lund). But when the bond rally is over and her lover gone, Miss Norris realizes her awkward position in this town where everyone knows everyone. Her son is adopted by a couple whose baby has just died; and Miss Norris learns (through years of yearning) that "just bringing a child into this world doesn't make you its mother." The picture's final scenes in wartime London will tear the hearts out of all women, particularly mothers (and I suspect fathers and even stony bachelors will sniffle too). Griff Barnett, as the erring girl's father who says, "We don't judge each other; we love each other," and Roland Culver, as Miss Norris's English friend, give moving portrayals. But this is really Olivia DeHavilland's picture. Her smooth, honest performance as the young girl, the efficient business woman, the heartsick, rather frustrated spinster-type, stands with the best acting that cinema has to offer today. The men's characterizations are by no means neglected in this film, but since events are seen mainly through Miss Norris's eyes and from her viewpoint, "To Each His Own" must be called a woman's picture, a label however, that does not detract from its interest.

For my money *"One More Tomorrow"* is not anyone's picture. A watered remake of "The Animal Kingdom," it might better have been left to the past when Leslie Howard, Ann Harding and William Gargan made Philip Barry's lines and situations seem so amusing. In similar rôles now, Dennis Morgan, Ann Sheridan and Jack Carson appear rather second-best. Alexis Smith, as the mercenary schemer who nabs the hero when he's not looking, is properly calculating and cold. The plot, which was slight in the first place, has lost most of its point; and as entertainment, the movie is not worth the time or effort of anyone involved—including the audience.

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Books of the Week

Our Own Kind. Edward McSorley. Harper. $2.50.

IF Edward McSorley's age has anything to do with the excellence of his first novel (he is not a young man), it may indicate that we are entering a more balanced period in American publishing in which youth will no longer be considered a writer's first charm. Perhaps because he waited an unusually long time before writing it, Mr. McSorley's book is good enough to make a reader forget that we have already had so many novels about Irish-American metropolitan life—from Studs Farrell to Betty Smith. The activity in this novel takes place in a poor and sometimes elemental Irish neighborhood in Providence, Rhode Island, during the years just before the first World War, so there are bound to be some comparisons with Betty Smith's successful book about the Irish in Brooklyn. I much prefer McSorley to Smith, and their likeness as writers seems limited to this resemblance in basic material and a shared belief that the lives of the people they are writing about amount to something. Otherwise, Mr. McSorley's carefully expended prose and his racial instinct for restrained burlesque remind me of the kind of writing favored by James Joyce when he wrote "The Dubliners."

The main string in Mr. McSorley's story—the plans and ambitions of an unlettered Irish immigrant for his orphaned grandson—runs through some dangerous emotional territory and might easily have been trampled in a bog of sentiment. Mr. McSorley prevents anything like that happening by an honest distribution of the realities that make up Irish character; fantasy and genuine religious emotion are wisely limited by examples of the Irish genius for vulgarity. For instance, a description of the grandfather's death is bracketed by a pair of wholly unesthetic episodes, one of them a wonderful account of the old man's misapplication of some Sloan's liniment.

Fortunately, Mr. McSorley is always able to distinguish between things that are vulgar and things that are merely unpleasant and tedious, a quality that makes it possible for him to write effectively about the orphaned grandson's mental-emotional growth without stopping off for a monotonous examination of those adolescent struggles that many writers find so fascinating. The combination of all these things make this a fine novel, and it is good to know that Mr. McSorley is now in Maine working on a second book. JOHN BRODERICK.

The Torrents of Spring. Robert Payne. Dodd. $2.75.

IN an introductory note to his novel Robert Payne says that it was "written in the conviction that now more than ever is it necessary for the West to understand the East, and that words like 'democracy' and 'freedom' must be understood and put into practice as well as reverenced."

On that basis it would be tempting to criticize "The Torrents of Spring" for its lack of realism. With all its romantic love for things Chinese, I should not think that the book would give a Westerner much of a basis for understanding famine and war in China. Perhaps it will sell like hot cakes in China, but it is my impression that the novel is written in the manner of an outsider. The author's western idealism gets in the way of the substance of his book. He draws pictures on a screen, a lacquer screen, but I cannot feel my way behind them. The marriage of East and West seems to be wrapped up in the "Hall of the Splendid Cloud." But novels should be judged as such and not merely as social documents.

The story is of Shaofeng, Lifeng and Rose, two brothers and their sister, who grow up in the province of Szechuan during the Manchu dynasty. They were the children of a prominent government official who had them brought up in the tradition of Chinese classicism, interrupted at intervals by Rousseau, Montesquieu or Kropotkin. Gradually they awake to the needs of revolution and finally become part of an abortive uprising under the distant leadership of Sun Yat-sen.

"The Torrents of Spring" is to be followed by a series of novels tracing the evolution of modern China.

If Robert Payne's romantic and image-loving style seems to obscure our understanding of China's political realities, it is no less harmful to his characters and plot. It may be "poetical" but it is certainly not poetry, and it loses much of the strength of prose by its drifting language. China during the Manchu dynasty may have been a cloud cuckoo land, but pages full of adjectives like "exquisite," "tender," "beautiful" or "somnolent" make the style fade as well as the subject.

Anyone who has been as much praised for his style as Robert Payne should be brought to task on a few counts at least. Here, for example, he is describing a young girl luxuriating in bed: "She half-closed her eyes and allowed her long black silky eyelashes to behave like a curtain against the world," and: "In bed you can curl yourself up much more easily than when you are standing."

"He was obviously moved, and beads of sweat stood out thickly on his temples—or perhaps they were drops of snow."

"She began to bite her arm exactly as she would bite corn-cobs later in the summer, drawing it backwards and forwards against her teeth . . ."

I did not find that repetition of phrases like the following made the book more beautiful: "He felt that everything was unbearably beautiful . . ."; "She knew she was beautiful"; "He felt that the slave boy had made the day more beautiful than any other day he had experienced." These are the devices of sentimentalism. Unfair as it is to take phrases from their context, a style is characterized by them and is helped or hindered by them.

Like anyone else I enjoy reading about herons, chrysanthemums, green rivers or white moons, but more as written actualities than as one-dimensional backdrops. A "poetic" style is no excuse for limp writing. I was more convinced by the author's personal sensitivity and idealism than I was by his creation.

When Shaofeng, Lifeng and Rose leave the Splendid Cloud and become revolutionaries they go into a practical and physical world, into a new kind of idealism. I confess that their part in the revolt seemed a little clumsily handled, but perhaps Robert Payne's forthcoming books will make their rôle more convincing to a Westerner trying to come closer to the East. JOHN HAY.

Public Men. Edited by J. T. Salter. Chapel Hill. $4.00.

THESE portraits of twenty-seven prominent Americans holding or seeking office at present vary widely in viewpoint and tone. Professor McKean's appraisal of Boss Hague is poles apart from Robert Thompson's hopeful estimate of Harold Stassen, to take extreme instances. The book is a series of opinionated, persuasive analyses rather than an attempt at complete objectivity.

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It is informative enough to raise the question of organizational reform in Congress. For seniority has placed at the head of a number of the leading Senate and House committees men with little qualification beyond the ability consistently to bring out the vote or a long record of party loyalty. The wonder is that our American government has functioned as well as it has. Yet in critical times the danger of entrusting authority to men of such little competence for their positions points to the need of severe structural reform.

San Antonio: City in the Sun. Green Peyton. McGraw. $3.00.

THIS SERIES of feature articles, held together mostly by geography, makes fairly pleasant reading. Mr. Peyton (the jacket informs us that his full name is Green Peyton Wertenbaker) has gathered together a great quantity of facts, legends, rumors, opinions and guesses about San Antonio's remote and recent past.

On occasion the author rises to a more serious level—e.g., in discussing the burdens of the Spanish-speaking population and some efforts to lift them. His sympathy for the city's 130,000 "Mexicans" is unmistakable, and what he says concerning their character and general situation, while hurried and not very profound, would be highly beneficial reading for most of their fellow townsmen.

Mr. Peyton puts the finger on a couple of other local problems—the press and the politicians—and bears down vigorously. Maury Maverick and his ancestors to the third generation come off well. Father Carmen Tranchese is praised generously for his devotion to the people of the West Side slums and his promotion of public housing. There is a good brief account of the founding of the missions. However, in his offhand chapter on religion today the author begins with an astonishing statement: "No city in the United States—not even Boston—is more staunchly Catholic than San Antonio."

Writing of the 1939 episode of the pecan-shellers' union, Emma Tenayuca, and the anti-communist riot at the Municipal Auditorium, he concludes: "That was the last anybody ever heard of Emma Tenayuca or communism in San Antonio." Anyone? Emma is back this long time, pushing the party organization with undiminished zeal and with some success. The line seems to be modified to fit Texas tastes, but its devotees are tireless, if cautious, and turn up in strange places, while concentrating on the Negro and Spanish-speaking sections.

The book is marred by the author's cynical yet smirking references to adultery and prostitution. While he seems to consider these as harmless foibles and inevitable natural phenomena, yet he remarks their prevalence with something like a chuckle, and builds such a picture of sex excesses in the city that one might suppose no young woman safe on the streets, day or night, unless surrounded by armored cars. San Antonio is unique in its way, but not in that way. No doubt it has shared in the wartime let-down of morals. But neither in this respect nor in a few others less dubious but equally colorful under Mr. Peyton's brush does San Antonio stand apart from the nation.

In a word, blow off the froth and you'll learn a lot about the city and its development from this book.

J. M. HAYES.

Coins of the Popes. Joseph Coffin. Coward. $3.50.

WELL OVER 150 pages of text, including an informative general survey of papal coinage and useful notes on the mints and the engravers that served the popes, together with an alphabetical listing of the inscriptions appearing on the coins, make of this a serviceable handbook for those interested in numismatics. The seventeen plates which accompany the text are well chosen and indexed, while the appendix adds a practical touch in showing current prices for the coins. Unfortunately, Mr. Coffin's list of popes is not at all definitive; it contains 267 names (of which one is a reduplication and six are those of antipopes) and assigns regnal years that can frequently be questioned. HENRY G. J. BECK.

Beatrice Webb. Margaret Cole. Harcourt. $3.00.

MRS. BEATRICE WEBB combined in her frail but indefatigable frame both the best and the worst of modern economic reformism. And if her most recent biographer has chosen to concentrate on the legacy of her liberalism and to ignore the inherent logic of her atheism, we may attribute her very natural decision to an admirable sense of almost filial devotion. But it is suggested in passing that the discriminating reader, in fairness to himself and in fairness to the future of liberalism, will want to strike a better balance. For, unless the incredibly prodigious legacy of the Webbs to modern social progress is combined in their disciples with a sturdy Christian faith, the liberalism of the next few generations is headed either for the limbo of forgotten causes or, more probably, for the crudest type of totalitarianism. Or am I overly-pessimistic about the inadequacy of secularism in economics and sociology? Perhaps, but recall, if you will, that Beatrice Webb, in spite of her heroic attachment to the scientific method, went down to her lamented grave just a few years ago as a rather quarrelsome and tendentious apologist for the marxist communism of the Soviet. Her last will and testament was a rationalization, to the tune of two enormous volumes, of a philosophy of man which fifty years ago or less was just as abhorrent to the secularist as it is today to the Christian. Shall it be said that the "conversion" of the Webbs was merely a coincidence or a temporary aberration?

But enough of that. Margaret Cole's biography is not a great book, but it is a good book about a great woman. It's a story, interestingly told, about the female of that classic British partnership, which, by dint of prodigious energy and toil, transformed economic and social research into a respectable and a responsible science. It's the story, too, of something bigger than the life of a single woman or a single married partnership. It's the story, told by the weaving together of casual vignettes, of British "gradualism" as practiced by the Fabians. The book is required reading for anyone who would round out his understanding of the antecedents of His Majesty's Government of today. The British Labor Party presumably still adheres to "gradualism" in spite of Mrs. Webb's occasional misgivings about the philosophy which she and her husband had done so much to popularize.

The British Labor Party is indebted beyond all calculation to the spade-work which was done by the Webbs over a long and very fruitful lifetime. Indeed, all of us who believe in democratic social reform and reconstruction are equally indebted. It remains for the social scientists of our generation to build upon the scientific foundation which was set so firmly by Beatrice Webb

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GEORGE G. HIGGINS.

Mysteries' End: An Investigation of the Last Days of the Medieval Religious Stage. Harold C. Gardiner, S.J. Yale. $3.00.

LET THIS BOOK be immediately and warmly commended as a fine piece of scholarship, and a work of rich interest to those who are familiar with the medieval religious drama, or who are concerned with the historical background of the Shakespearean stage.

Father Gardiner's purpose in this essay is to treat fully of the reasons for the discontinuance of the medieval religious plays, particularly in England. In England, he asserts, the "true and practically sole cause" of this cessation was the "Reformation distaste for the religious culture of the past," made operative by such figures as Cromwell and Cranmer as early as the reign of Henry VIII, and under Elizabeth completing the eradication of the plays from English life. To stop the performance of the mysteries and miracles the Crown worked through the Privy Council, the King's Council in the North, the commissions for ecclesiastical causes, the justices and sheriffs. At the same time official encouragement was given to the anti-Catholic and anti-papal plays which were an instrument of Protestant propaganda, first in Germany, later in England. If, therefore, the old religious drama was seen no more after the 1560's in England, it was not due to the long-term effect of official Catholic opposition, nor to a change of taste among the people of the enlightened Renaissance, nor to the townsmen's unwillingness to bear the costs of the performances. These factors, which heretofore have been accepted as explaining the death of the medieval theater, were either non-existent or inadequate to check the traditional popular drama. The situation was pretty much the same in other countries where Protestantism spread; and even in lands which resisted the Reformation—in France and Northern Italy, for instance—both civil and ecclesiastical authorities inhibited the performances for prudential reasons. In Spain and the Tyrol, where Protestantism was less to be feared, the "medieval" plays survived for generations after they had vanished elsewhere.

Father Gardiner's use of his sources, which are enumerated in an excellent bibliography, is cautious almost to a fault, but he makes out a sound case for his main thesis. The volume includes a useful index.

This book, as stated already, is a work for specialists in the history of the late medieval drama, and necessarily omits the background which would make it appealing to a wider public. This is not to belittle its value in the least. The work represents a type of scholarship which has long and strangely been wanting in Catholic circles. As in practically every field of medieval studies (philosophy and the ecclesiastical sciences excluded), the most representative works on the medieval drama so far come from non-Catholic scholars. The integrity of these scholars is generally unquestionable; but their vision of the medieval scene is often impaired by their inability to understand Catholic doctrines, practices and attitudes which are clear to any well-instructed Catholic.

Father Gardiner has made such a contribution. His work is neither apologetical nor apologetic. He assumes

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a prudently aggressive position with regard to older interpretations of the facts under discussion, and in passing takes polite but effective issue with Dr. Coulton, the renowned misinterpreter of documents having to do with medieval life, and with other critics, past and present, who take it for granted that the Middle Ages were "the unpolished ages of Europe." But he justifies his exceptions and conclusions not by a priori method, but by careful investigation of the sources, which he has read in the light of "a deep appreciation of and sympathy with the religious life of the Middle Ages." When more works of the caliber of Father Gardiner's have appeared, a long needed re-evaluation of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance should emerge from the cooperation of Catholic and non-Catholic scholars. It will then be seen, I think, that Renaissance Humanism, for all its positive contributions to our culture, impoverished Western civilization as a whole by discarding, instead of absorbing, such old Christian elements as the religious drama.

This much being said about the scholarly aspect of "Mysteries' End" (over what editor's dead body, by the way, did this detective-thriller title get on the book?), it is a pity that Father Gardiner's essay is *not* of more general interest. Perhaps he will some day amplify his material, and present us with a rounded study of the medieval drama. The reading public in general, and the Catholic reading public in particular, should have opportunity for acquaintance with the cultural achievements of the people of pre-Renaissance Christendom. That moderately educated men and women of our time should have read Sophocles and Aristophanes, or Seneca and Plautus, and never even know the existence of the fifteenth-century Passion plays, or the English Nativity plays, is a ludicrous tragedy. Parish and school dramatic societies play the "classics," or borrow their material from the local play agency: Catholic gatherings are entertained by amateur and semi-pro imitators of radio personalities or raconteurs of switch stories on the priest in charge of the "affair"—surely the descendants of the dancing bears of the medieval marketplace—and meanwhile the fine plays of the English cycles are overlooked and ignored. This simply means that we are content to neglect the real educational and inspirational value of the old religious drama; because, as Father Gardiner well emphasizes, the substance of the traditional plays is religious and devout. Furthermore, while they are medieval in composition and idiom, their Christian content is timeless; and many of them could easily be redone in modern dress without violating their spirit or diminishing their power. Entertainment and religious inspiration and enlightenment have long since come to be considered as two entirely separate currents of group activity. But the vitality of the medieval plays suggests that, at least in Catholic groups and at least some of the time, the two currents might be reunited, and two birds be brought to life with one stone. GRANGER RYAN.

Science, Liberty and Peace. Aldous Huxley. Harper. $1.

THE THESIS of Mr. Huxley's pungent short essay is that, as Tolstoy wrote half a century ago, "if the arrangement of society is bad and a small number of people have power over the majority and oppress it, every victory over Nature will inevitably serve only to increase that power and that oppression."

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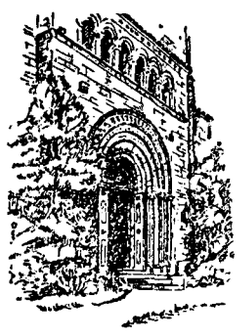

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against modern weapons than they were in the days of the barricades: the greater the technical power, the more it is concentrated against the masses. The answer, Huxley thinks, may be *satyagraha*: non-violent passive resistance, as employed by Mr. Gandhi, first in South Africa, then in India, and as employed by the Germans in the Ruhr against the French and—though Mr. Huxley does not mention it—by the Norwegians and the Dutch against the Germans in World War II.

But this discrepancy, between the armed few and the unarmed many, has always existed: and always on approximately the same scale. The Egyptians vs. the Israelites, the Greek oligarchy vs. the helots, the Roman authorities vs. Saint Maurice and the Theban legion. Jack Cade, or Wat Tyler, were in the same David-Goliath ratio that, yesterday, the French people were to their German conquerors. The true terror, as Mr. Huxley has most eloquently demonstrated in his "Brave New World" and now makes again abundantly clear, is that by controlling press and radio, by dictating the form as well as the content of education: by being able to use the best-armed secret police in history, the scientifically armed rulers may so far suborn the will and seduce the consent of the governed that for these the light which lighteth every man becomes darkness. "Man as a moral, social and political being is sacrificed to *homo faber,* man the smith," he declares, and he foresees a world no less nightmarish—and indeed very similar—to that postulated by Mr. James Burnham in his "Managerial Revolution." Mr. Huxley ends on a note which, after his grave warnings, seems one of childish optimism; that technicians and scientists (as Dr. Weltfish suggested in the *Scientific Monthly* for September, 1945) should swear an oath that they will not take improper advantage of their position, but always remember their responsibilities towards suffering humanity. Were Dr. Conant and the other atomic bomb researchers and experts so forgetful? Or was not rather their reason clouded by the exigencies of war? They surely thought they were doing their right and proper and patriotic duty: yet for Japan Hiroshima and Nagasaki were hardly evidences of American scientific remembrance and responsibility toward suffering humanity, while for Russia they were a selfish demonstration of an egoism unworthy of an ally and a partner (to say the least!) It is not the scientists, or the dictators who do wrong *knowing* it to be wrong who are imperilling themselves or the masses, or who are a danger to what little light is left to the world; it is those who honestly believe they are doing their duty and acting for the best. And against these, alas, Mr. Huxley's palliatives are powerless.

ANNE FREMANTLE.

CONTRIBUTORS

James E. MURRAY is the Democratic Senator from Montana. He is chairman of the Senate's Committee on Education and Labor and is a member of the Foreign Relations and Military Affairs Committees as well as of several others. His present article constituted part of an address given at West Virginia University.

Waldemar GURIAN is one of the editors of the *Review of Politics.*

John BRODERICK during the war served as an intelligence officer in the Air Force.

John HAY wrote for *Yank* and not for the *Stars and Stripes* as stated in a previous issue.

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